



GREAT PLACES PLACE PROFILE

The Place Profile will look different from one place to the next. However, all Place Profiles should address all seven dimensions of an Iowa Great Place, identifying the strengths of your place within each dimension, and the gaps that exist. Your Place Profile should provide information about growth and changes that may have occurred within each dimension during the past 3-5 years. Some possible indicators for each dimension are listed below – choose from these, or add others that make sense for your place.

Great Places Dimension 1: A Unique Sense of Place

An Iowa Great Place possesses a sense of place that values historical roots while embracing a shared vision which welcomes, includes and involves both natives and newcomers and promotes itself as a great place.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

- The level of engagement that exists around studying and preserving information about the history of your place and its people
- The most important or unique identifying characteristics of your place, as understood by people within the place as well as people who visit the place
- Evidence of a sense of identity in your place that is shared broadly among its people
- Evidence of how the place welcomes visitors or newcomers
- Evidence of how the place values the preservation of its history
- Information about how leadership is conferred in your place – do you have elected leaders? Who makes decisions for the place, and who/what informs those decisions?
- Evidence of the pride in your place (as it is, was, and is becoming) felt by the people who live, work or visit there
- Evidence of growth or change in sense of place over the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 2: Engaging Experiences

An Iowa Great Place provides and supports authentic, credible and varied opportunities for individual and community expression, interaction and common experiences.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

- Number of artists and/or arts organizations found in the place, and their visibility in the place
- Physical and recreational opportunities available in the place, including information about who uses and doesn't use them, and their physical accessibility.
- Description of opportunities that exist in the place for people to engage in activities which are creative/artistic, reflective; physical/recreational; intellectual, and fun/rewarding.
- Description of opportunities for life-long learning
- Description of festivals, events or other activities that occur in the place, on a regular or annual basis
- Descriptions of fun events or activities available to adults, children, families, singles, young adults, seniors, teenagers, etc.
- Description of amenities and attractions in the place, such as parks, shopping, restaurants, etc.
- Evidence of growth or change in the engaging experiences offered in your place in the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 3: A Rich Social Fabric

An Iowa Great Place promotes and encourages social interaction – formal and informal – throughout the community or place, with equal opportunity for all people to participate.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

- Demographic information about the people in your place
- Description of the diversity that exists among people in your place
- Description of the formal groups and structures that bring people together in your place, and inclusiveness of those groups and structures
- Identification of “third places” (gathering places beyond home and work) that exist in your place, who uses them, and how they are used
- Evidence of multiple and varied opportunities for people to gather, both within their informal groups and networks, and across these lines
- Evidence of how your place welcomes newcomers
- Evidence of how your place honors, values and involves the diverse population that exists in your place
- Description of your place’s organizational leadership, both governmental and non-governmental
- Description of how decision-making occurs in your place, and how people are involved in decision-making
- Evidence of growth or change in your place’s social fabric in the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 4: A Vital Economy

An Iowa Great Place contains a balanced, growing, transformative mix of rewarding jobs and sustaining capital.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

- Description of the employment opportunities in your place, and the mix of jobs they offer
- Statistical information about the unemployment rate and wages available to workers in your place, and benefits that are generally available to workers
- Description of the mix of businesses in your place: small businesses and large, nonprofit organizations, individual entrepreneurs, corporations, manufacturing, basic services, etc.
- Evidence of the presence of progressive, innovative employers
- Evidence of the presence of family-friendly and community-involved employers
- Evidence that business ownership reflects the diversity found in your place
- Evidence of support for and opportunities for business development (business parks, venture capital, supportive regulatory environment including zoning, building permitting, streamlined processes, etc.)
- Evidence of support and encouragement for entrepreneurial endeavors
- Evidence that local businesses and financial institutions have invested in your place themselves
- Evidence of employment opportunities for diverse populations
- Description of what aspects of your place contribute to Iowa’s creative economy
- Evidence of growth or change in your place’s economy over the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 5: A Pleasing Environment

An Iowa Great Place offers clean, healthy and accessible natural and built environments that enhance the quality of life.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

- Description of the natural environment in your place – green spaces, water systems, etc.
- Description of the built environment in your place – streetscapes, residential areas, business district, etc.
- Description of systems in place to protect and sustain environmental quality: clean water, clean air, and healthy living for those who live, work and visit your place

Evidence of a growth plan that addresses balance between aesthetic elements and infrastructure needs

Description of organized efforts to develop and maintain the pleasing environment in your place – beautification committees, planning teams, etc.

Evidence that efforts to develop or maintain a pleasing environment are inclusive of the diverse population that lives, works or visits your place

Inventory of existing or envisioned public art in your place

Description of who makes decisions about design of both natural and built environments in your place

Description of what is unique about your place's natural and built environments, and of how they are physically accessible to all who live, work or visit

Description of public spaces that exist in your place, and evidence of their "people-friendliness" (accessibility, child-friendliness, aesthetics, safety, mixed-use possibilities, etc.)

Evidence of growth or change in your place's natural and built environment over the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 6: A Strong Foundation

An Iowa Great Place contains infrastructure that is available, accessible and responsive to everyone – the entire social fabric.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

Description of transportation systems in your place, including systems for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic

Description of the housing mix in your place

Evidence of physical accessibility throughout the place, in all systems and structures

Evidence of directional signs that welcome people and effectively assist them in moving through your place

Evidence of planning for and improvement of infrastructure systems in your place

Evidence of consideration for mixed uses of public spaces, systems and structures

Evidence of how quality of life has influenced infrastructure decisions in your place

Maintenance plans and records that show attention to upkeep and access in public spaces, systems and structures

Information about planning and implementation of strategies to ensure safety for those who work, live or visit your place

Evidence of welcoming, inviting public spaces that are both well used and well maintained

Evidence of public support within your place for improvements to and upkeep of the place's infrastructure foundation

Evidence of growth or change in your place's infrastructure foundation over the past 3-5 years

Great Places Dimension 7: A Creative Culture

An Iowa Great Place displays a shared attitude of optimism that welcomes new ideas, based on a diverse and inclusive cultural mosaic.

Your Place Profile might address the following:

Examples of creative problem-solving used in your place on previous occasions

Evidence of support for creative entrepreneurs, and outreach to new entrepreneurs

Information about how new and creative ideas are encouraged in your place

Evidence that creative ideas are encouraged, supported, embraced and celebrated in your place

Proportion of the population that is age 17-35

Ethnic and racial diversity of the population

Evidence of growth or change in your place's creative culture over the past 3-5 years